

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

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In view of the following remarks, and the amendments made to the claims, reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Applicant specifically thanks Examiner Stinson for the courtesies extended during the interview on December 9, 2003. During the interview, claims 1, 6 and 9 were discussed in relation to prior art documents Geib et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,804,726), Japanese Document 5-309193, Meredith et al. (U.S. Patent No. 2,442,308) and Castwall et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,991,247).

During the interview, Applicant's representative proposed to amend claim 1 to recite that the microphone is mounted on the outer tub in a manner corresponding to former claim 2. Although claim 2 was not specifically indicated as rejected or allowed in the last Office Action, the Examiner clarified that claim 2 does indeed include allowable subject matter. Specifically, the Examiner stated that amending claim 1 to include the microphone mounted on the outer tub would place the claim in condition for allowance. Claim 1 has been amended in accordance with this agreement and correspondingly, claim 2 has been canceled. Similarly, claim 9 has been amended to indicate that the microphone is mounted on the outer tub. Finally, claims 8, 12 and 15, which were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim but were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form, have been rewritten in independent form.

As amended, all the current claims contain subject matter which has either been indicated as allowable in the last Examiner Office Action or, alternatively, was indicated to be allowable during the interview. To this end, all of the claims should now be in clear condition for allowance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the claims be allowed

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and the application expeditiously pass to issue. If the Examiner should have any additional concerns regarding the allowance of this application, he is cordially invited to contact the undersigned at the number provided below if it would further expedite the prosecution of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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